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SECURITY INFORMATION

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17 April 1952

SUBJECT: Newspaper Articles

TO: Chief, DYCLUCK - OPC
Washington, D. C.

1. We are forwarding herewith newspaper articles about two fairly prominent personalities which may be of interest to Hq.
2. Further articles in these series will be sent as they are published.

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Deputy Chief of Station

/ Encls: Clippings //w

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EXEMPTIONS Section 3(b)

- (2)(A) Privacy ☐
(2)(B) Methods/Sources ☒
(2)(G) Foreign Relations ☐

Declassified and Approved for Release
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Date: 201, 2005

NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT

THE MAN WHO KIDNAPPED MUSSOLINI, KEY BRAIN OF A HUNDRED EXPLOITS . . .

Skorzeny turns up— and poses a picture

From CHARLES FOLEY

MADRID, Sunday.—Scar-faced Otto Skorzeny, the man who kidnapped Mussolini; the brain of a hundred exploits which won him the reputation of "the most dangerous man in Europe," has come to life again. I saw and talked to him today.

I knew he had reached Spain. Through German friends I traced him under his new name and challenged him to meet me.

Fantastic stories have followed his elusive trail since he vanished after the war. It was reported that he was dead; that he was working secretly with Martin Bormann, Hitler's deputy, for a great Nazi revival; that military and police were hunting him all over Europe.

In secret files

What was the truth? I asked. Skorzeny agreed to tell me. And as I listened to his account of secret war-time missions and what had happened since, I began to realize that this was indeed a most extraordinary man.

The Mussolini kidnap was only one action among many as far as Skorzeny is concerned. For every exploit he gave details that can be checked in the captured secret German files.

Never before has Skorzeny spoken out. Seldom, indeed, has he been seen in the last seven years. Twice only have news photographers surprised him. Two years ago, in Paris, a picture of him walking down the Champs Elysees provoked street battles and a parliamentary crisis.

Again last month, a cameraman "shot" him in a restaurant with Dr. Schacht, Hitler's economic vizier.

Speculation piled on mystery. There was only one way to end it. I told our intermediaries.

Half-hour wait

Skorzeny fixed a bold rendezvous. We would meet at 2.30, the smart luncheon hour in Madrid, and at Horcher's, which is famous for its German food and German clients.

I waited half an hour. I wondered if he would come. Then a shadow darkened the alcove. A huge figure stood over the table.

"How are you?" The voice was built for larger spaces. "I am sorry; my car broke down on the road." A bow. "Otto Skorzeny at your service."

The most dangerous man in Europe? Even in a lounge suit, Earl Mountbatten's wartime opposite number, who directed—and led—Hitler's commandos, has the air of a man-eating tiger on parole. In his early 40's, Skorzeny, 5' 11", thin frame has lost nothing of his menacing proportions. And I found that his air was as sudden as a club.



Scar-faced OTTO SKORZENY

"At last I can drop the mask"—and with hair slicked back, he permits a picture for the first time in seven years.

The extras

Goering's favourite restaurateur in Berlin hurried forward to pay homage. Horcher brought little extras: hearin of artichoke, lobsters cooked in cream, for the Herr Colonel.

"You are known," I said. He grinned. A duel scar zig-zagging from his left ear met the corner of his mouth and drove across his chin. A man who needs no passport.

We talked. Skorzeny showed delicacy. It was unbecoming, he felt, for a defeated soldier to thrust himself into the limelight. Especially if one was, let us say, a shade conspicuous.

Because all his possessions were "liberated" by the Allies, he had some memoirs published on the Continent. That brought more trouble. There were still more solid reasons, too, for keeping out of sight.

"Believe me," he said, "for some years it has not been pleasant to be known as Mussolini's rescuer. The Russians were so keen to use my talents that they twice tried to kidnap me."

Not ashamed

"Here in Spain, I feel at last that I can—as you say—drop the mask. The worst bitterness of war is past. There is no reason for secrecy. I am not ashamed of what we did and how we did it."

Tonight I called at an elegant little white villa. A new German car stood outside the door. Skorzeny's.

We sat in easy-chairs. The pictures on the walls were of flower scenes.

Skorzeny looked at his watch. "Mussolini time," he said. He took it off. A fine gold wrist-watch and on the back the Napoleonic initial "M" with the date of the famous raid. He laughed.

"I must try to live this business down. Here in Spain I am working 15 hours a day, trying to build up various engineering enterprises. I am working for the future, but I don't want to talk about that yet."

"As to the past, history never turns back and for my part I don't want it to."

Head for Germany

War Secretary Mr. Anthony Head will visit British troops in Germany after Easter.

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THE TOUGHEST MAN ALIVE ... Fourth Day

Continuing The Exploits and Philosophy of OTTO SKORZENY, the man Hitler chose to carry out his most spectacular exploits. Skorzeny, hunted for many months, is now in Spain, and has told his story in interviews with Express Foreign Editor Charles Foley.

THERE are times when a million men can be saved by the removal of a single obstacle:

The obstacle, in the story I am going to tell, was Admiral Horthy, Regent of Hungary, at the moment when he had decided to betray Germany and make a separate peace with Stalin.

Today Admiral Horthy is by way of a neighbour of mine—he has a villa over the Portuguese border at Estoril. The last time I saw Horthy I had the honour of escorting him to Germany under a guard provided by the Fuehrer. I must add that his enforced departure followed rapidly after that of his son Nicholas who left by airplane in still less conventional circumstances.

Orders

I began, as usual with my being called to Hitler's front headquarters. To a group of us — Himmler, Ribbentrop, Keitel and Jodl were there—Hitler said: "Regent Horthy is secretly negotiating with Stalin. He has offered unconditional surrender. If the Hungarian salient collapses a million German soldiers or even a million and a half, will be lost. He turned then to me. "You, Skorzeny, will prepare to seize the regent's castle at Budapest. I will give you the most extraordinary, written powers." On a sheet of State paper with the German eagle and iron cross in gilt, I read that I had been charged by the Fuehrer "to execute personal and confidential orders of the highest importance. All military and civilian services must bring every possible help to the bearer."

So I had to remove one man to save a million



HORTHY ... escorted.

and must comply with all his wishes. Signed, Adolf Hitler." With this warrant I could have burned Germany upside down. In fact I decided not to use it.

I hoped to use more delicate means. I believe a touch with the finger at a vital point will accomplish what the most monstrous of cannon cannot do. Budapest was the core of all our communications in the south. If fighting started openly, German troops and police would be outnumbered five to one by Hungarians.

As for the Hungarian armies facing Russia, they too would roll back and turn against us. The whole front would collapse.

For the moment we were allies. We must remain so or all would be lost.

I arrived in Budapest in the guise of a civilian, Dr. Wolf, to find out what was happening.

I learned that Horthy was using his son Nicholas, a political playboy in the thirties, as his agent for secret peace talks. Here was the weak spot I always look for.

Ambush

THE peace talks were going on in Budapest itself. Stalin had intermediaries. They were to meet the following Sunday in a building on the Danube at 10 a.m. A chance to bag the lot.

I drove up to the building in time to see two German policemen walk up to the door. Instantly the shooting started.

Hungarian troops were everywhere — the house next door was full of them. They were in the gardens opposite. They were firing from a truck behind my car. A double ambush.

My driver was hit. One of the German policemen rolled down the steps to my feet. I fired back as best I could and whistled for a German company we had hidden round the corner. As they came up at the double the Hungarians rushed into the house next door for shelter. German hand grenades brought down the doorway and bottled them inside.

Down came the German police from Nicholas Horthy's room, carrying the regent's son and three Titoists. All were struggling violently. To avoid another street scene we rolled them into carpets.

Thus, rendered both harmless and speechless, they were driven to the airport and shipped to Germany.

Now for the castle. It was already in a state of siege, with all roads cut off. At 2 p.m. Admiral Horthy broadcast from his castle: "Hungary has now

concluded a separate peace with Russia."

Too late? It is never too late. First we demanded that mines and barricades on the road up to the Vienna Gate of the castle should be removed so that German diplomats, whose embassy was on the hill, should come and go.

This being agreed, it was time for the great gamble.

German troops silently took up positions all round the hill. At 3 a.m. I explained my plan — to lead a column straight up to the Vienna Gate as if it were the most natural of Sunday morning jaunts.

My orders: Every man to sit upright in his truck, safety catches on all weapons; no shooting.

Surrender

WE started up the slope at 6 a.m. I sat up in my truck, all the way. Behind me, a group of tanks and a battalion of paratroops, the best and steadiest in Germany.

Now we were at the Vienna Gate. A group of sentries, they stared at us but never did they suppose we could be rolling up in parade order without permission from the castle. For the sentries, another mile to go. Machine-gun posts we passed them nonchalantly.

The castle square loomed up. Three big tanks faced us, guns turned to the sky, a barricade of building blocks. Now!

I signalled to a giant Panther to crash the barricade. We rushed through the breach, bounded up the castle stairs. An officer came at me with a pistol. I did not give him time to think. "Take me," I cried, "to your commandant at once."

Deathroll

SAID to the commandant: "The castle is already in our hands. You must surrender."

I took up residence myself as the new commandant. In the great hall where the kings of Hungary were crowned I addressed the Hungarian officers.

"Do you want to fight against your enemies the Russians or against us your allies?"

Admiral Horthy's apartments were empty. Having sought to betray us to the Russians, he had fled for refuge to the German Embassy. Government was empty. That was all that was left of the war. A million Germans lived to fight again. And Hungary fought on beside us to the very end.

The quicker the action the slighter the sting. To capture a fortress by textbook rules would have cost thousands of casualties.

Our deathroll in a ten-minute skirmish by our encircling forces totalled four. The Hungarians lost three men. The entire operation lasted half an hour.

We had a joint funeral with much official pomp to erase the last traces of bitterness, and that night we banqueted together. German officers and Hungarians to celebrate the deliverance of our armies. You may be sure we had the best wines from the cellars.

The guest

NEXT day I was presented formally to the regent. He had already received pressing invitation to be Hitler's guest. I accompanied him on his last journey to the station.

In Admiral Horthy's magnificent train — built for the Emperor Franz Joseph — I made myself responsible for his safety until he reached a castle in Bavaria where he remained very secure indeed.

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THE TOUGHEST MAN ALIVE

Presented for the first time ... the fighting philosophy of Hitler's Soldier-Without-a-Textbook, ex-SS man OTTO SKORZENY. Do his exploits entitle him to be known as "The Toughest Man Alive" ...? Well, judge for yourself as day by day his story is told ... by CHARLES FOLEY



Drawn by ROBI

UNAVAILABLE COPY

Look..... this is how it happened... Four minutes of my life that boosted me to fame...

FOUR minutes is the time it took me to crash through the jailers and reach Mussolini. The odds against us were fantastic. That is why I knew we could not fail.

The bigger the guard the safer they feel. The better the troops the more automatic their reflexes. They are trained to obey, to wait on a command. Under orders they will fight like copybook heroes. Without orders they are lost.

One thing more I have learned. If the surprise is big enough you can always count on three full minutes of confusion. In the case of Mussolini it took an extra minute, but we pulled it off.

That extra minute won a year of freedom for Mussolini. We snatched him from the air just as he was about to be handed to the Allies. He was grateful to me. I was loaded with presents and a photograph inscribed "True friendship for ever—Mussolini."

But the man's vitality was gone. I saw him again for the last time just before his end came in the bloody carnival of Milan.

He talked for hours about the catastrophe facing Europe and the Asiatic peoples. A sad decline.

The luck of that extra minute made me famous overnight. I am never allowed to forget it.

Mission

FOR me, it was one mission among many. For Germany, the propaganda value was beyond price. It inspired the last war bulletin to be broadcast with victory fanfare.

Hitler counted it a great battle won. He ordered a brother officer in Vienna to hand me his own Knight's Cross so that I should be the first soldier to be decorated on the very day of the action.

The story began when I was suddenly etched by special pen to the Fuehrer's headquarters. This was the first time I saw Hitler.

He told me Mussolini had been overthrown and arrested by a treacherous new Italian Government. He said:

"Italy is on the verge of crossing over to the Allies. Mussolini must be rescued before he is handed to Eisenhower. I entrust you with this mission. Whatever the dangers you must succeed. The effect on the course of the war will be incalculable."

False trails

I AM no hero-worshipper. Yet I must admit that Hitler's gaze as he shook hands conveyed a hypnotic conviction. I went out to Rome under the command of air force General Student. Only three other men in Italy were let into our secret. Mussolini had been spirited away by his captors. The search was a desperate race across false trails laid by the Italians. At last we found he was immured in the naval fortress of Santa Maddalena.

I flew over the island to reconnoitre. British fighters forced my plane into the sea. I was rescued by an Italian cruiser.

Luckily they could not guess my errand. I had torn off my uniform. A naked man offers few clues to his identity.

There'll be no hiding-place, I tell you, for future fuehrers

When all was ready for the assault we were staggered by a senior officer. Admiral Canaris, Chief of German Intelligence, claimed that Mussolini was not on Santa Maddalena, but on another island near Elba, which we were to attack at once with paratroops.

Warning

TODAY we knew that Canaris did not want Germany to win the war. He gave Hitler false information. If we struck at the wrong objective it would be fatal for Mussolini's chances. It would also justify Italy in some-sneaking into the Allied camp.

So with Student I flew to the Fuehrer's headquarters. Then, as always, I expressed my opinions frankly.

Hitler decided Canaris was wrong. He approved my plans for an attack on Santa Maddalena by land, sea, and air. Then he added this uncomfortable warning: "If the raid fails I may have to repudiate you. I shall say you acted without orders. You must not defend yourself against this accusation."

I have no doubt he meant it. I saw Rudolf Hess after the war in Nuremberg. He flew to Britain on Hitler's orders to seek peace, and he was discovered as a madman when he failed.

Before the final assault on Santa Maddalena I visited the island disguised as a sailor. My hair stood on end when I found that Mussolini had been taken off that morning in a

white ambulance plane. For me it was a narrow escape from the padded cell.

Through a series of ruses we discovered he had been transferred to an Alpine hotel 4,000 feet up the Abruzzi range in Italy. Every route was cut off by Italian troops.

In the hotel he was guarded by 20 crack mountain soldiers with orders to fight to the death.

I flew over in a scout plane. The hotel was a fortress on a jagged peak. In the freezing sky I hung from the waist out of the plane to take pictures while my adjutant held my legs. When it was his turn to try.

We flew home to land and found our headquarters bombed to bits. Fighting had also begun between German and Italian troops round Rome.

Zero hour

OUR pictures showed a rough field behind the hotel. The only hope was to land gliders on it, to strike so quickly, so suddenly, that Mussolini's guards would have no time to resist, no time to carry off their prisoner.

Our experts said "Impossible." That put fresh heart in me because the enemy would think so too.

The experts said we could not put down more than 100 men in such a space; never had gliders landed in such thin mountain air; we would be lucky if 20 men lived to fight 250 Italians.

We dashed our plan. I fixed zero hour for 3 p.m. and of waiting for next day's dawn. That meant landing in full daylight against incalculable warm air currents.

Another bombing raid came just before we left, and two of our 12 gliders hit craters in taking off. That left ten. Halfway there, at 12,000ft, the two leading gliders simply disappeared. They were to have led us down and covered the attack.

Climax

WITH a knife I slashed the fabric between my feet to see where we were going. The Great Sassa swung below. The gliders were released.

Another shock: the field behind the hotel was as steep as a ski-jump and it was strewn with southern like bathtubs.

General Student had forbidden us to crash-land. Must we then, abandon the attack and sail down to the valley? Orders in my philosophy must at proper times be disobeyed.

I shouted to the pilot: "Crash-land." We hit the ground. We tumbled over the rocks.

I was alive. I tumbled out of the wreckage with several men behind me. First thing I saw was a corner of the hotel with an Italian sentry.

Now the climax. The soldier was stupefied when we crashed out of the sky. I knew what he wanted—his soul cried out for orders or at least for fire to return. We did not fire.

With my men panting behind me I ran past him to an open door. Another soldier was sitting at a radio transmitting set. I kicked the chair from under him. I smashed the radio with my gun.

We raced round another corner of the hotel. There, at a first-floor window, a familiar shaven head. Mussolini! We dashed for the main entrance.

Two machine-guns. We knocked them over.

The hallway was full of Italian troops. Before they could begin to think I forced a way through the mob with the butt of my Tommy-gun and rushed the stairs three at a time. I turned down a gallery, threw open a door at random.

Surrender

THERE was Mussolini with two Italian officers.

In a moment I was joined by a friend. He thrust the officers out of the room, banged the door. Mussolini was in our hands.

By now six more gliders had landed. The last was smashed to pieces. Still no shot had been fired. "Commander," commander came into the room. I gave him 60 seconds to surrender.

Thoughtfully, he filled a goblet with red wine and handed it to me. "I am the victor," he said. I drank it. I was thirsty.

A sheet waved from the window. My men swarmed in. You cannot foresee everything. We had planned to take Musso-

lini down the mountain side, but we could not get contact with our paratroops below.

Then I saw a German observation plane—a Storch—hovering over the hotel. I got the troops to clear a rough runway and signalled the Storch to land.

Captain Girschach, Student's personal pilot, stepped out. I said he must lift Mussolini out. He went pale. I said I would go with them. He said: "Impossible. We would never leave the ground. Even a tiny plane like this must have a proper runway."

TOMORROW: That Bomb... chaos... and one soldier's chance...

Take-off

SO I appealed to him. Even if my 15 alone increased the prospect of disaster it would be better that we should all die together than that I should survive alone to give Hitler the news that in rescuing Mussolini we had killed him.

We squeezed in together. With soldiers hanging to the wings, the engine was started. The soldiers let go. Rocking helter-skelter as it bounded over the stones, the Storch gained speed. Ahead was a crevasse.

We lifted just enough to take the jump, hit the ground again, and saw over the edge of the field and down.

I waited for the crash. But Girschach evaded out a few hundred feet over the valley and flew through a gap in the mountains towards Rome. Our landing gear was damaged in the take-off. Girschach made a two-point landing. We were there.

Long faces

I STILL laugh to think of the long faces at the Fuehrer's headquarters when I left Hitler. After an "After: receiving his congratulations."

The staff were horrified. If Mussolini could be kidnapped one day, then Hitler might be carried off the next.

For hours security chiefs grilled me on the operation. We drove round the headquarters looking for weak spots and contriving new defences.

But, take it from me, there will never be a certain safeguard for future fuehrers.



RECEIVED
MAY 1945
OFFICE OF THE
ATTORNEY GENERAL
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Listen, gentlemen, strike No damage can match the terrible disease of doubt

SEE BELOW



FOR 36 hours after the famous July 20 plot on Hitler's life I found myself in supreme command of all the German armies of the interior and in the satellite countries of the Reich. I was a lieutenant-colonel. I was 33. And I had in those two days a terrifying glimpse of how the most efficient war machine in the world can be completely seized-up by a single jolt.

Terrifying then, but full of promise for the future, when such opportunities will be made and skillfully exploited against an enemy.

Take the crisis as it stood. Our troops were fighting desperately on all fronts. The Allies had broken through in Normandy. In the East 30 German divisions had suddenly capitulated. Thirty divisions. More than the total effective forces facing Russia in Europe today.

We soldiers struggled on. We knew of nothing else to do. But for a handful of high staff officers around Hitler there was an alternative. They conspired to kill him with a suitcase bomb.

The conspiracy

THE plot was fumbled—trust staff bunglers—for that. Yet the fact that Hitler was wounded shows how easily a few men trained to action instead of to palaver might have succeeded.

And the mere attempt caused such chaos that it may be taken as a model for the confusion agents of a World War III.

The first I heard of the conspiracy was when my troop-train out of Berlin halted at a station. An officer ran down the platform. He was bawling my name.

"Highest orders," he panted. "You are wanted at once in Berlin. An attack has been made on the Fuehrer's life!"

Back in Berlin the chair-borne warriors were throwing a panic party.

At Warden SS headquarters they distributed pistols to all hands. Six frightened clerks tried to stop me at the door. I threw them into the cellars and locked them up after depriving them—much to their relief—of their dangerous toys.

None of the staff officers knew what was happening or who had risen against whom. But all gesticulated wildly with revolvers when I questioned them. They were sending armoured units out against Military Intelligence H.Q.

Heaven knows what would have happened if I had not stopped this.

Centre of plot

I WENT round looking for General Student, commander of our airborne troops. I tracked him to his villa. A pretty scene—Student was peacefully reading while his wife worked at her embroidery. He had not heard the news.

Marshal Goerring telephoned from the Fuehrer's H.Q.: "For heaven's sake avoid any incident that might plunge us into civil war."

He at least understood the consequences of panic.

It seemed that the War Ministry was at the centre of the plot. I raced to the building. Remer—the general who is now said to fancy himself as another German Fuehrer—had already surrounded the War Ministry with his troops.

As I arrived at midnight, General Fromm, commander-in-chief, got into his car. "I am going home now," he said. We saw him no more.

Inside the War Ministry I found General Beck had just committed suicide. Three staff officers had been shot by firing squad. Nobody knew what to do next.

Think how such a vacuum could be filled by a hostile Power that knew its business.

INSTALMENT 3 of—

THE TOUGHEST MAN ALIVE

This title, which is in itself a challenge, brings you day by day the one-war-against-the-fabulous ex-S.S. man OTTO SKORZENY, as told to Express Foreign Editor CHARLES POLEY.

In the enemy camp will be a major war aim of the future. That is striking at the brain. No germ warfare can compare with the terrible disease of doubt.

But to make sure the arteries also must be cut. Next time, deadly forms of surprise will paralyse great cities, capture factory centres from the air, strangle the pipelines of supply by methods the enemy will not suspect until he is gasping for his life.

Improvisation

ALL these wonderful projects depend on our clearing space for men with the vision to look beyond mass

bombardments to a new conception of war where initiative is all. Some of my finest schemes were stifled by generals and politicians living in the past. Hesitation, ignorance, compromise are fatal. I had to fight all three.

Given time to plan, absolutely nothing is impossible. With us it was always improvisation—that is why we sometimes failed. There was Operation Vichy.

I went secretly to Marshal Petain's capital. In a week or so I had laid an invisible noose around the city.

I was ready to kidnap and transport the entire French Government to Paris. The order did not come.

It seems laughable now, but all the German Intelligence services simply could not decide

whether Petain was working for Germany or against her.

There was the commando raid on the Iraq pumping stations—six captured Flying Fortresses we were to use for transport were destroyed in a British bomber raid. No more could be found.

If ever I had nightmares I should prefer not to recall our last and most spectacular effort. I do so now because it is a pointer to the future.

Somewhere in Russia, in the vast forests north of Minsk, 2,000 German troops were cut off, hundreds of miles behind the Soviet lines. If by some means they could be got out it would prove to our reeling armies in the East that no fight is ever hopeless.

Again, 20 men attempted the impossible. We formed four groups, each of two German soldiers and three Baltic volunteers who spoke Russian.

All were disguised in Soviet uniforms—(false papers, hair clipped

to the skull. Russians rations in their packs.

Group A dropped 350 miles inside enemy territory to find the lost army, which was led by a Colonel Scherhorn. They radioed. Bad landing. We are under fire. We did not hear from them again.

Group B went over. Four nights of silence. Then the call-sign with the secret signal which told us they were talking freely and not at the point of Soviet revolvers. Glorious news. They had reached Scherhorn.

Our when Group C—to vanish

for ever in the Russian void. Group D missed Scherhorn, but three weeks later they rejoined us with vital information.

Meanwhile we dropped doctors and supplies of all kinds to our lost army. Scherhorn began to build a landing strip from which we could take off 20 at a time.

Then the Russians launched heavy attacks on them. A change of plan. We told Scherhorn to go northward 100 miles to a lake area where we might use ice for runways.

The lost army

OUR 2,000 had been cut off in June 1941 when the northward march began. All the way we dropped warm clothes and more equipment to beat off the constant Soviet attacks.

Scherhorn's progress was agonisingly slow—ten, seven, five miles a day.

Now it was February 1943. By then I was myself trying to hold the Russian onslaught in command of a division.

Petrol supplies for the supply flights ran down. Every night I listened helplessly to Scherhorn's appeals: "Help us. Do not forget us!"

The lost army reached the frozen lakes. We could not fetch them. We could not help them. Now they were dying of hunger.

We heard the last dim call from Scherhorn on May 8. He did not know that Germany had surrendered two days before. I am glad to recall that, before it was too late, we dropped him the Knight's Cross.

History will record this tragedy as a triumph. These men fought and survived for a whole year. They lasted out the war.

What will the future hold when full divisions will be sustained and lavishly supplied by air in areas far behind the tide of battle?

WORLD COPYRIGHT

DAILY EXPRESS WEDNESDAY APRIL 16 1953

at the brain

... That bomb plot made Hitler a physical wreck... so I took over control myself for the 36 hours till Himmler came to relieve me.

Otto Skorzeny

Moral wreck

THERE was nothing left but to take over myself until a "safe" general could be appointed. So for 36 hours I was free to move reserve armies and equipment all over Hitler's Europe. The fighting fronts had to be kept going.

At last I was relieved—by S.S. Reichsfuehrer Himmler himself. The plot made Hitler a physical and moral wreck. From then on he trusted nobody.

Next time I saw him he had aged terribly; he had to clutch his left hand with his right to stop it trembling.

Hysterically he berated his field-marshal before the entire general staff.

The destruction of confidence

See Above

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

EXCLUSIVE TO THE DAILY EXPRESS: The philosophy of Skorzeny—the soldier-without-a-textbook—

THE TOUGHEST MAN



DAILY EXPRESS MONDAY APRIL 24 1950

—who thinks one war ahead

ALIVE



... and a free hand
and nobody will be
safe if war comes

Give me 1,000 men

THERE ARE challengers, of course, to his title—The Toughest Man Alive. . . . Ever since the Daily Express announced that Hitler's almost legendary aide, OTTO SKORZENY (pronounced Skord-zayni) was to tell his story in relation to the times we live in there have been those ready to put forward other claimants to the title.

"I COULD mention So-and-So in a British Commando," they say. Sergeant This and Major That and Brigadier The Other, all have their proponents and supporters. And all with good reason.

BUT JUDGE for yourself. Read the Modern Day Adventure Story of Scarface Skorzeny—told in a series of interviews with Express Foreign Editor Charles Foley—before you decide.

I NEVER learned to click my heels. I was never taken in by the conventions they call the military art. But I have made a deep study of the soldier's mind. It is frequently too dense to go through. It is never too broad to be outflanked.

Listen, the next war is going to be so different from anything the generals imagine that many of them will not know where they are until they find the enemy behind their lines.

And a lot of them, if I guess right, will wake up on the wrong side of the front.

They will be kidnapped. Give me 1,000 men—you can lose as many in an hour storming some useless hill—with a free hand in wartime, and nobody will be safe. What is the loss of 1,000 men compared with the capture of a commander-in-chief with half a dozen of his staff and all their records?

I have had a little practice at kidnapping. I have proved the possibilities and I know the lesson has been taken to heart by, among others, the Russians. Next time no king or president will sleep securely, wherever he is put.

Confusion!

THAT is not all. One man or—as I will shortly show—one woman who is willing to die is capable of doing more damage to a nerve centre than a 1,000-bomber raid in which several hundred airmen may be casualties.

Ample will find battalions in their own uniform among them—the enemy. There will be panic and confusion.

CONFUSION—that is the

TOMORROW:

Now I 'Kidnapped' Mussolini
—and could use the technique again.

easiest harvest to sow, the richest to reap in the military mind. Soldiers are lost without orders and, above all, with no fire to return.

People I run into today take me for the thing incarnate, bred to violence and bloodshed. In truth I practised the utmost economy in killing. I never fired first. That is the secret.

In peacetime I was happy as an engineer. I did not touch a gun until the war. Today I am trying to catch up on life where I left it off. But it is easier to win a reputation than to live it down.

First job

I WAS a young lieutenant in Holland when Hitler was planning the invasion of England. They had 20-ton

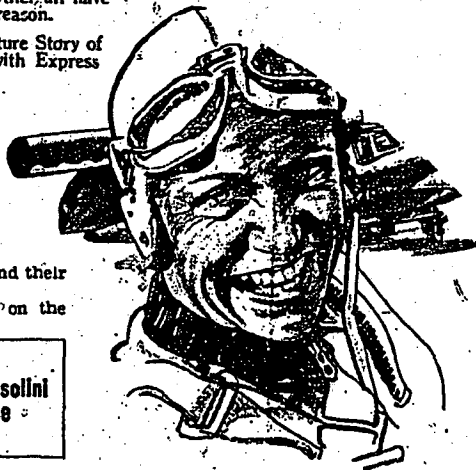
tanks ready and no way of getting them into the ships.

I sketched out a ramp. I found a Dutch factory to build it. The workers were sulky. Instead of pulling a revolver I gave them schnapps and chocolate. We worked all night. Next morning I drove the first big tank aboard up my ramp.

So you see that it was not bravado that gave me a head start in the war business. I fought then in Russia and in Yugoslavia. I became an expert in improvising for the unexpected.

It was then that I was called to the headquarters of the Waffen S.S. Hitler's elite guard, and offered the command of all existing and future German Commandos; we adopted the word from the British. That is not all we took from you. I was given a vast mass of reports on

—PARTICULARLY IF MY
1,000 HAVE NERVES TO
MATCH 'THE V-1 GIRL'



British Commando raids from Dieppe on. It took me a fortnight to go through them. I was dazed with delight as if a new world had opened to me.

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I envied you

First, I set up head quarters in a building near Berlin. Prisoners and double agents—men who work for both sides in the field—were housed in the brilliant British training schools. British planes which flew heavily over the Continent to drop explosives and radio sets on the enemy were loaded to suit our technicians' needs. I was sure if the staff fell into our hands, we heard the British had a few silent revolver—I sent an order on a captured British pilot to get a few more. We also got a silent British Sten-type gun.

Wonderful response. Our agents refused to copy German plans. They were so sure their strategies would be staged on the home front.

My admiration for the British Commanders turned to awe. British could call on cruisers, fleets of planes. I had to fight for every man, every item.

Commanders sent me a message behind each of our four fronts and two infantry divisions. I found the time our British friends spent in the air. The R.A.F. made three bombing raids on my headquarters. Each time we were told to be destroyed. Well, we had to be. So much for bombers. I would have more respect for a box of matches in the right hands.

Next time...

We used human torpedoes with great success. One man swam out, packed with explosives against your ships. We built one-man submarines. We edited fragments of tomorrow's news. One of my fellows sank 70,000 tons of Allied shipping in 18 months—how many costly submarines would it have cost to sink him. To the military mind he was unbeatable—a freak.

I was inspecting the V-bases at the time. I was told by a pilot that the possibility of a V-bomber was a five-mile radius somewhere in a brave man's mind. I was told by a House of Parliament.

One life for such a target in a bombing raid. I could not understand which with a V-bomber. Hitler wanted quick results.

With Hitler's unknown blessing we had the first model of the pilot V ready in 15 days. Then I ran into that amazing spirit Hanna Reisch, and I found she had the same idea some months before. Hanna was a military man. She crash-landed in the first

training for one-way missions in V's. We were going to send a flock of buzz-bombs so that your fighters would not know which to attack.

The need

But the last battles were already near. The general was the pretext of a general shortage to starve us of fuel. The training had to stop.

There were more like Hanna. She was more like a civilian and the only woman to win the Iron Cross First Class. At the end she flew to Hitler in a direct mission. She landed in a direct mission. She landed in a direct mission. She landed in a direct mission.

She landed in a direct mission. She landed in a direct mission. She landed in a direct mission. She landed in a direct mission. She landed in a direct mission.

Panic plan

An enigma to the VI. I was telling that we planned to launch VI's from the air. We planned to launch VI's from the air. We planned to launch VI's from the air.

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In Russia...

Our series of V weapons (V stood for Vengeance) reached a development (terrifying for the future) in the autumn of 1944. West Germany the other day was working seven years ago on the V's—a bomb that could destroy cities and half the world's population and fall within a radius of 400 miles of its target.

The rest of this scientist's team and its equipment were carried out by the Wehrmacht. With an atomic V's we might still have the V's successor might be lobbed on to the Empire State Building.

A scientist who cannot sleep for thinking of it.

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drawn by ROBB

let plane in 1942. For months she was in hospital. For months more she fought to get her legs back.

Hanna's idea

Hanna, a tiny-haired and fragile, but all the same, she saw behind the project. She saw the first piloted weapon crash in landing, then the second.

The Air Ministry banned her from the project. She came to me with the end. I suggested that I should ignore the ban. She would take the next VI up herself.

Hanna, if you are killed, Hitler will have me beheaded.

She went up in a VI, which was lifted off the ground by a parent plane and then released. The moment of my life. The landing was perfect. Hanna lived me and said:

Then you are silly. The other one simply weren't used to being in the air. I told Air Marshal Milch the truth.

Was he delighted? He said: "Hanna, you have brought you to the gallows."

Generals don't like suicide missions. Even Hitler was willing to sacrifice them. I prophesied devastating consequences.

Soon I had nearly 100 men